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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5547  
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE  
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0083  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 3676  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 7181  
RUDKIA/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 0778  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2984  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0647  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000007

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STATE FOR EAP AND IO; PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/27/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BM](#)

SUBJECT: BURMA'S TOP GENERAL IN SINGAPORE FOR HEART  
TREATMENT

Classified By: A/DCM Leslie Hayden for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary: The Singaporeans confirmed to us that Senior General Than Shwe is in Singapore General Hospital undergoing treatment for a coronary artery blockage. His treatment is expected to continue for the next few days. No. 2 General Maung Aye is reportedly in charge. Post has no reason to believe Than Shwe has fled the country or that a coup is underway. In other significant developments, the regime recessed the latest session of its sham constitution drafting process, extended the remand of the five detained leaders of the 88 Generation Students, and granted amnesty to 2,831 prisoners, most of whom were jailed on criminal charges. End summary.

Than Shwe Ailing  
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¶2. (C) Singaporean DCM Mark Low confirmed to us that press reports indicating the Burmese military regime's top leader, Senior General Than Shwe, is in Singapore for treatment of a coronary artery blockage were accurate. Low said he was confirming the information to us in confidence and that, officially, Singapore was referring to Than Shwe's travel to Singapore as a "private visit." Low relayed that Than Shwe's treatment began on January 2 and was expected to continue for a few more days. Singaporean officials are not aware of his current condition.

¶3. (SBU) Than Shwe reportedly traveled to Singapore during the weekend with his wife, Daw Kyaing Kyaing and their daughters Dewar Shwe, Kyi Kyi Shwe, and Aye Aye Thit Shwe. Some press report Than Shwe was scheduled to return to Burma last Monday, but will now miss Burma's January 4 Independence Day celebration in Nay Pyi Taw that he was scheduled to host. There are reports he may also miss the official quarterly military meeting that is usually held during the second week of January. Vice Senior General Maung Aye is reportedly in charge. There is no information regarding Than Shwe's absence or travel in Burma's official press.

Other Significant Developments  
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¶4. (C) On December 30 the regime recessed the latest session of the National Convention (NC), their manipulated and orchestrated constitution drafting process (septel), which they call the first step in the Regime's "roadmap to democracy." Contacts and the official press report the regime completed work on the last eight of the fifteen chapters. Chairman of the NC, Lt. General Thein Sein, announced the NC would reconvene "at an appropriate time in 2007," but did not specify when.

¶5. (C) On January 1 the Kyauk-ta-da Township court extended the remand for the five detained leaders of the 88 Generation Students: Min Ko Naing, Ko Ko Gyi, Htay Kywe, Min Zeya, and Phone Cho. This was the fifth extension of their remand and it was unusual that it was done on a holiday when courts are officially closed. The regime renewed the remand from a different township court to skirt the requirement that the accused may only be remanded for two weeks without a trial or sentence. The interim 88 Generation leaders have joined forces with lawyers from Aung San Su Kyi's National League for Democracy Party to petition the court to release the leaders or proceed with a trial.

¶6. (C) Today the regime announced it would grant amnesty to 2,831 prisoners. The amnesty is mostly for criminal prisoners, although we know of a few political prisoners from Insein prison, Mandalay prison, and Thayet prison who will be released under the order. The amnesty does not include the most prominent political prisoners such as Aung San Suu Kyi, U Tin Oo, Win Tin, or the detained leaders of the 88 Generation Students.

Comment

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¶7. (C) Than Shwe's reported delay in returning to Burma may indicate that his heart condition was more serious than anticipated or that he needed immediate, preventative treatment. The irony is lost on no one that Burma's "excellent" healthcare system was not good enough for the country's leader. The lack of official information on Than Shwe's health and travel will undoubtedly spur speculation and rumors regarding his condition and who is really in charge in Burma. False reports over a year ago, that Than Shwe was in Singapore being treated for a heart attack, set off a frenzy of rumors in Burma and in the exile press. Despite persistent murmurings of tension between Than Shwe and No. 2 General Maung Aye, Than Shwe's position appears to be secure. His picture continues to grace the regime's mouthpiece newspaper, The New Light of Myanmar, along with his Independence Day messages. We have no reason to suspect he has fled the country or that a coup is underway. End comment.

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